

# REHABILITATING STREETS AND BUILDINGS IN NASHUA



A GUIDE FOR  
FACADES,  
STREETS AND  
MORE



CITY OF NASHUA, NH

DOWNTOWN NASHUA



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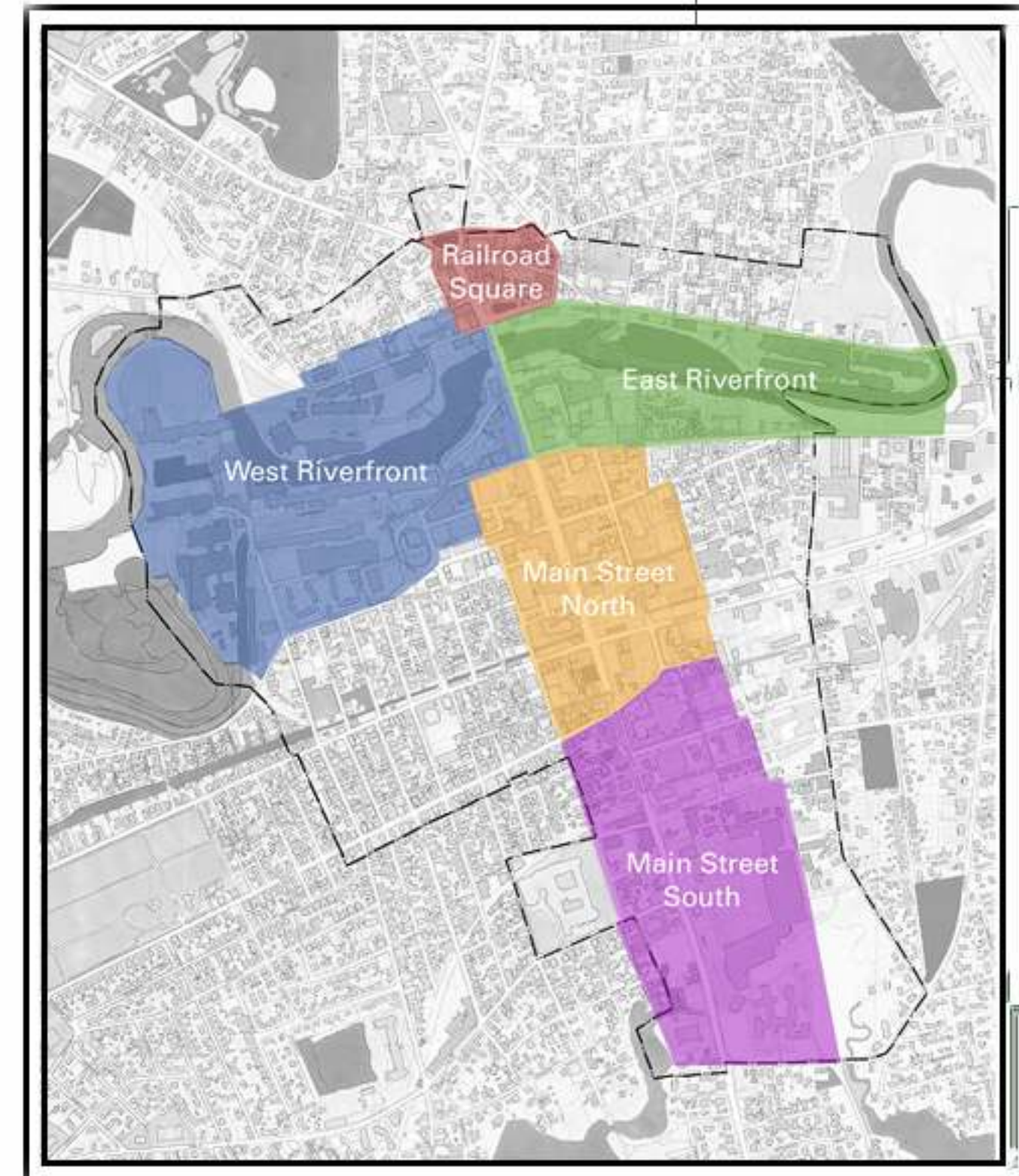
## THE PROGRAM

Nashua, New Hampshire, originally known as Dunstable, started as a farming community but since then has grown into the second largest city in the state. In 1823, with the creation of Nashua Manufacturing Company, Nashua became an industrial community and much of the rich history of Nashua comes from the mills which later closed in 1948. Since then, the electronics age has brought Sanders, now BAE Systems, to Nashua, as well as the Pheasant Lane Mall. With the new mall, downtown began to wither until it was again sparked into revival in the 1980s.

In 1823, Asher Benjamin created a design for the city of Nashua where the Olive Street Church and the Nashua Manufacturing Company were set on axis with each other on Pearl Street. As a result, businesses and stores were between these two landmarks. Asher Benjamin's plan was applied for nearly 100 years, until after World War II when its simple urban relationships were abandoned. In the Downtown Master Plan set forth in 2003 for a 10 year plan which served to set overall goals, policies, programs, and implementation strategies for future downtown development. The focus included Main Street, especially the South end as well as in the area near Railroad Square. This plan calls for "private building renovations that build upon the City's architectural character" and "public investments in streetscaping that improve the pedestrian experience."

Using what was set forth by the Downtown Master Plan, this book serves as a guide for renovations, storefronts, and facades by private owners in Nashua in conjunction with the City's revival of the downtown. By working to keep within the City's character, Nashua can continue to develop as a vibrant city and ultimately to create a lively, walkable downtown.

## DOWNTOWN NASHUA NH





# BEFORE

235-255 Main Street



This block, located on Main Street, shows promise of becoming a thriving business area by updating historic storefronts.

## **SPALDING BLOCK**

- Restore Brick Facade
- Full Length Windows added
- Entablature for signs to go with building
- Inappropriate awning
- Storefront restored

## **HOLMAN BLOCK**

- Full Length Windows added
- Paint to Match Pediment
- Windows should not be filled in
- Entablature for signs of inappropriate material
- Storefront restored

## **POTENTIAL SITE FOR TWO INFILL BUILDINGS**

## **AARON STEVEN'S HOUSE**

- Shingle style exterior revived
- Restore Palladian window detailing
- Signage improvement
- Inappropriate colonial windows, restore recessed window detail
- Inappropriate doors
- Bay windows restored
- Should have brown wooden shingles



# HISTORIC VIEWS

*These historic photos demonstrate how to appropriately restore this block.*



# AFTER



*This is a drawing of what the block could potentially look like after refurbishing the storefronts and adding infill buildings.*



# BEFORE

## 5-39 MAIN STREET



### **WHITING BLOCK**

- Full length windows on all stories

### **ZIBA GAY HOUSE**

- Remove added siding to reveal brickwork
- Windows with stone sill/stone lintel
- Entablature for surface mounted signs
- Restore storefront with wood and glass configuration on storefront
- Full windows with appropriate muntin

### **ADD NEW INFILL BUILDING**

### **DUNLAP'S BUILDING**

- Entablature for surface mounted sign
- Add ornate cornice
- Windows that are full length
- Restore façade from 1950s with white detailing for storefront

### **OLD MISS NASHUA DINER**

- Restore sills
- Bottom floor with more windows with white trim
- Clapboard siding

This block on Main Street has the potential to return to its historic roots to bring Railroad Square to life.



# HISTORIC VIEWS

The historic facades of this block appear below.



# AFTER



This is a view of the storefronts after restoring the facades and adding appropriate signage.



# Recently Renovated Facades



BEFORE

AFTER





# Maintaining Facades



-Parapets and masonry should be repointed to prevent collapses. This is especially important when mortar is missing and water is accumulating in the joints. Mortar should duplicate the composition, color, texture and hardness of the original. Joints should not be overfilled.

-To clean masonry, gentle means should be used. Any missing bricks should be replaced by similar looking bricks.



-Detailing should be maintained by cleaning and any rotted, rusted or broken sections should be replaced with materials that matches with the old.



-Repainting facades that are starting to flake will help maintain the exterior. Using bright colors, such as neon yellows or other colors that do not fit with the character of the building is inappropriate.



-Iron components on a storefront should have paint removed to restore the crispness to the details and may be repainted afterwards. All rust should be removed before repainting.



-If columns are missing, aluminum can be a successful substitute if the columns do not carry a great load.



# Windows



Appropriate windows on Main Street



If windows are being replaced, the new glass should match the original.

Windows should be the full length as suggested by the original design. Care should be taken to maintain the sills and lintels.

Tinting or mirrored glass is inappropriate in most cases on historic buildings.

Multi-paned windows are generally inappropriate for commercial buildings. Windows should be maintained with the original design, most of which are one or two panes.



Inappropriate window for Main Street

# Shingles



Adding vinyl or aluminum siding on buildings that are traditionally wood sided is discouraged. The original character of a building should be maintained, whether it is repainting wood or replacing the wood siding with the same wood siding. Siding that replaces existing should not cover architecture detailing.

Covering masonry work with vinyl or aluminum siding is inappropriate.



Inappropriate vinyl siding



Although this house on Main Street should be painted white, the slate roof, detailing, and the shingles have been correctly maintained.



# EXTERIOR RENOVATION



## Appropriate Facade Renovation

An example of good facade renovation



## Inappropriate Facade Renovation

- Removal of detailing
- Vinyl siding to replace clapboards
- Windows filled in
- Two different roofing materials
- Inappropriate multi-pane windows
- Incompatible door design
- Colonization by adding shutters
- New windows do not maintain the old style
- Iron railings that should be wood
- Foundation material not maintained

# HOUSE STYLES

## Colonial Houses

Colonial Houses include the styles of Postmedieval English, Dutch Colonial, French Colonial, Spanish Colonial, Georgian, Adam, and the Early Classical Revival.

### Adam

The Adam, or Federal style was popular from 1780 to 1840. It often includes a semi-circular or elliptical fanlight over the front door, decorative crown, small entry porch, cornice with decorative moldings, dentils, double hung sashes with six panes, and windows aligned in symmetrical rows.



ADAM

## Romantic Houses 1820-1880

Romantic Houses include the styles of Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Exotic Revivals, and Octagon.

### Greek Revival

The Greek Revival style dominated from 1830 to 1850. This style is often identified by the gabled or hipped roof with a low pitch, a cornice line which represents the classical entablature, elaborate entry, porches, and columns, often Doric in nature. The windows have six-pane glazing and the grating is typically of decorative Greek pattern.



GREEK REVIVAL

### Italianate

The Italianate style was built primarily between 1850 and 1875. Normally, Italianate houses are two or three stories, often have a square cupola or tower, have a low-pitched roof with overhanging eaves, and decorative brackets. There are also tall, narrow windows which are often arched and have elaborate crowns. Most have the inverted U shape. The sashes should have one or two pane glazing and windows typically are hooded, bracketed and/or pedimented, or framed.



ITALIANATE



# HOUSE STYLES

## Victorian Houses 1860-1900

The styles of Victorian Houses include Second Empire, Stick, Queen Anne, Shingle, Richardsonian Romanesque, and Folk Victorian.



SECOND EMPIRE

### Second Empire House

Second Empire Houses typically have a mansard roof with dormer windows, molded cornices, and decorative brackets. These types of houses were typically built between 1860 and 1880. Windows may be similar to Italianate windows or could be unelaborated.



QUEEN ANNE

### Queen Anne

Queen Anne houses, typically built between 1880 and 1910. Some identifying features include a steeply pitched roof which is irregularly shaped, patterned shingles, cutaway bay windows, and an asymmetrical facade. Towers are a classic feature. Most have partial or full-width porches which are one story high. Doors and windows tend to be simple and sashes only have a single pane of glass. Roofs are very heavily accented and principal roof forms include spindlework, free classic, half timbered, and patterned masonry.

### Shingle

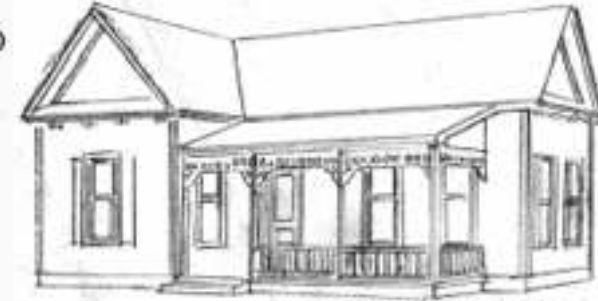
Shingle style, identified by its wall cladding and roofing which is made of continuous wood shingles was popular during the years between 1880 and 1900. Many of these examples originally had wooden roofing, asymmetrical facades with steeply pitched roofs, intersecting gables, multi-level eaves, various dormers, and extensive porches. Typical elaborations include equal-sized sashes, recessed windows, Palladian windows, one or two-story bay windows, and strips of three or more windows.



SHINGLE

### Folk Victorian

The Folk Victorian style was dominant from 1870 until 1910. Features very common to this style include porches with spindlework detailing, symmetrical facades, and cornice-line brackets. Decorative detailing on a simple folk house form defines this style. The decorative detailing is traditionally Italianate or Queen Anne inspired.



FOLK VICTORIAN

## Eclectic Houses 1880-1940

Eclectic Houses of this period include Colonial Revival, Neoclassical, Tudor, Chateausque, Beaux Arts, French Eclectic, Italian Renaissance, Mission, Spanish Eclectic, Monterey, Pueblo Revival, Prairie, Craftsman, Modernistic, and International.

### Colonial Revival

This style, typically seen between 1880 and 1955 emphasizes an accentuated front door with decorative crown, pilasters, columns, doors with fanlights, facade which is very symmetrical, double-hung sash windows, multi-pane glazing, and windows in adjacent pairs. Revival entrances differed through the years they existed.



COLONIAL REVIVAL

### Neoclassical

Neoclassical existed from 1895-1950 and includes a full-height porch with a roof that is supported by classical columns. Most columns are typically Ionic or Corinthian. The facade is also symmetrically balanced. Unlike early classical revival and Greek revival, they often include side and wing porches, roof-line balustrades, exaggerated broken pediments, full-width raised platform porch, and a low balustrade around the platform porch.



NEOCLASSICAL



# Setbacks



## Residential setback

Along Main Street, houses and residential buildings should be set back a small distance from the sidewalk. In other areas in the City which are almost completely residential, the setback is further from the sidewalk.

## Commercial setback

These buildings should be up at the sidewalk as is consistent with other buildings in the area.



Before



After

# Streetscape



The South side of Main Street should be finished similarly to the rest of Downtown with brick, trees, and granite curbsides.



Bikeracks, fountains, and displays are strongly encouraged.

Lighting along Main Street should be appropriate with the character of Downtown. Power lines should be put underground and light posts should be uniform for the entire street.



Two appropriate types of lighting for Downtown



# Fencing



Appropriate iron fencing



Wrought iron fences are appropriate on Main Street and commercial areas. Discretion should be used in choosing the correct height based on nearby buildings or views. They should, however, not be highly stylized or used in residential areas.

Brick, granite, and stone walls fit within the character of Downtown and also residential areas. Concrete block should be avoided.



Stone walls in Downtown



Inappropriate wood fencing

Wood fences are inappropriate on Main Street. Wood picket fences should be only used in residential areas and should stay at a maximum of 4 feet. Hedges can also be used in certain circumstances as fencing.

# Fencing



Fencing in residential areas



Chain link fences and jersey barriers are strongly discouraged and should be avoided.



Inappropriate fencing



# Infill Buildings



Inappropriate infill building

The structure of the infill building should match with that of neighboring buildings. For example, storefronts should match those on the block. It should fill the width of the site.



When adding infill buildings, they should remain true to the character of the block.

Infill buildings shall maintain a common setback and be of similar height and width to adjacent homes. Roofs and the building itself should be consistent with abutting properties.

When adding infill buildings, they should remain true to the character of the block.

Commercial infill buildings should be flush with other buildings and up at the sidewalk.



# BEFORE

## 188 Main Street

The building at 188 Main Street maintains many of its original features. Appropriate signage and landscaping will serve to enhance the facade.

Cut one of the three trees and trim the existing trees to reveal the front of the building

Remove some of the ivy to reveal architecture detailing

Replace internally lit box signs

Relandscape the area near the building





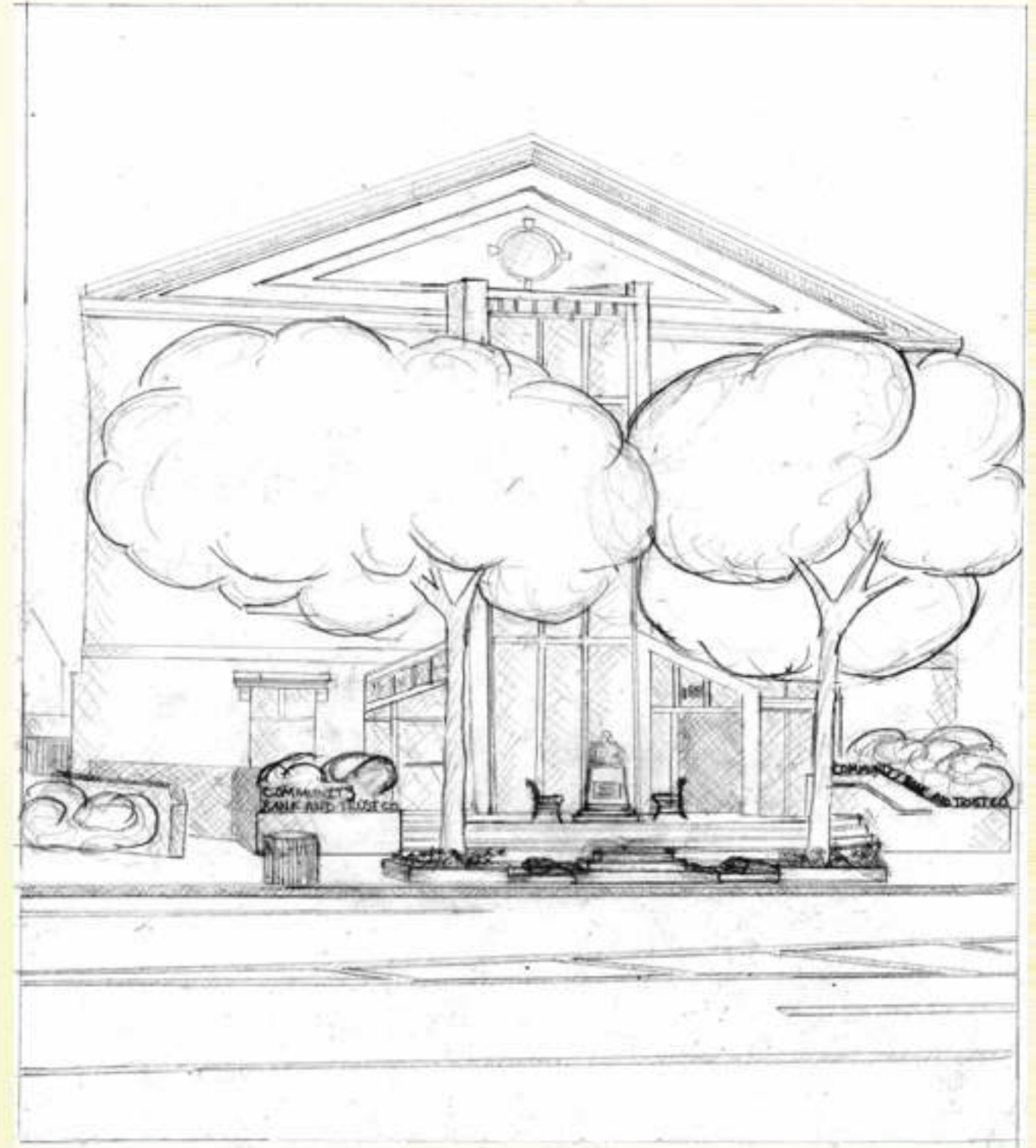
# 188 Main Street

Signage



By adopting this type of signage, similar to this example from Boston, 188 Main Street can still have illuminated signage. It also is more enticing to the general public than the internally lit box signs.

## AFTER



By changing the landscaping and signage, the building can become part of the fabric of Downtown Nashua.



## DOWNTOWN SIGN EXAMPLES



## OTHER SIGN EXAMPLES





# Sign Guidelines

## Ground Signs

Maintaining proportions of the sign in relation to the building is crucial.

Free standing signs should be made of wood on steel poles.



## Wall Signs

Business signs should not obstruct other buildings, other signs, or important views.

Wall signs should stay within the entablature for a building. The lettering and logos should fit with the character of the building.



## Projecting Signs

Wood should be used for projecting signs with paint, the text and/or emblems.

Signs should be easily readable and the color scheme should correspond with the building and surrounding area. Using bright colors that do not fit with the historical character of a building are inappropriate.

Signs should complement the architecture, particularly on historic buildings.





# Lighting



Internally illuminated box signs are discouraged.

Externally illuminated signs are strongly encouraged.



Light fixtures that are cantilevered at a consistent distance for the building are especially appropriate in downtown.



Examples showing the numerous possibilities for Downtown.

# Awnings

Awnings are an appropriate addition to many of the buildings on Main Street. They should be installed so as not to damage the building or impair distinctive architectural features.



Awnings should be of canvas material. The use of aluminum or rigid plastic awnings is discouraged. Supports should be non-corroding, with such materials as galvanized or stainless steel.



Canvas material has an average life expectancy of 4 to 7 years and awning coverings should be replaced after this amount of time.









CITY OF NASHUA, NH